

SELINGSGROVE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS  
MINUTES OF MEETING – SEPTEMBER 13, 2021

The regular monthly meeting of the Selingsgrove Area School District's Board of Directors was held on Monday evening, September 13, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Selingsgrove Area Middle School, 359 Seals Avenue, Selingsgrove, PA 17870.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the President, Mr. Dennis R. Wolfe.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited by those in attendance.

A roll call indicated a quorum with the following members present: Mr. Larry D. Augustine, Mr. William L. Bechtel, Jr., Mr. David W. Hess, Mr. Andrew V. Paladino, Atty. Matthew A. Slivinski, Mrs. Amelia G. Stauffer, Mrs. Kara L. Taylor, Mr. Kenneth B. Teats, Jr., Mr. Dennis R. Wolfe, and non-voting member, Dr. Frank R. Jankowski, Superintendent.

Others present were: Mr. John Bohle, Dr. Matthew Conrad, Mr. Erick Decker, Ms. Michelle Garman, Mr. Damian Gessel, Mr. Jeffrey Hummel, Mrs. Susan Lipsey, Mr. Kevin Oswald, Mr. Brian Parise, Mr. Paul Roman, Dr. Jason Schmucker, Mr. Justin Simpson, Mr. J. Michael Wiley, Esq., Mr. Mark Wolfberg, Ms. Claudia Beaver, Olegario Martinez, Amanda and John Fromille, Brandon Smith, Mike Stebila, Robert Phillips, Matthew Smith, Dalton Savidge, Jake Lewis, Ashley Kolak, Stephanie Heddings, Kim Rigel, Jessica Chappell, Paige Smith, Amanda Martin, Susan Tamanini, Miranda Ulrich, Kimberly Suman, Brent Hackenburg, Andrew Stewart, Angelo Picerno, Dalton Savidge, Joy Hahn, Marcia Moore (Daily Item) and approximately 20 additional interested individuals

**Consent Agenda:**

Motion by Teats and seconded by Stauffer to approve minutes, reports, and bills lists, as presented. (copies of reports and bills lists to be attached and made a part of the official minutes)

On roll call vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 absent

**Announcements:**

Mr. Wolfe announced that an Executive Session dealing with legal matters was held earlier in the evening. He also announced that the next regular monthly Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 12, 2021. Mr. Wolfe called attention to the addendum to the agenda which included two additional personnel matters.

**Opportunity for Public Comment:**

Mr. Wolfe commented that two individuals have requested to speak, and he noted that any individuals present that wish to address the Board, should complete a request to comment form at this time.

Mr. Brandon Smith, father of two daughters in the district, indicated that he had questions regarding contact tracing. He explained that his daughter who attends the elementary school was contact traced, and as a result everyone in the family stayed home. Mr. Smith stated that his wife had reached out to both the guidance office and the nurse, and they appeared to not be on the same page regarding the rules for contact tracing. He questioned how attendance and absences are being addressed and how this will be handled throughout the school year? Will students be able to work remotely and not have the absences counted against them?

Dr. Jankowski responded that contact tracing is currently occurring in every one of our school buildings. He explained that the contact tracing that is being applied, is that the person who is in close contact is the person who must be excluded from school for a period of time, but the

other members of the household do not have to be excluded. Dr. Jankowski noted that we are working administratively with our teachers to consistently provide access to information for those students. We want our students here. It's an unfortunate circumstance when students must be quarantined because of being in close contact. Dr. Jankowski remarked that we do not create those rules and are trying to be as flexible as we can be, while still following the expectations from the Department of Health on that topic.

Mr. Smith questioned how these absences will be handled since students have only a limited number of excused absences?

Dr. Jankowski referred to correspondence that was sent out to parents/guardians last week regarding contact tracing. The correspondence explains that if a parent/guardian (household member) is having symptoms and/or getting tested, we are asking you to keep your students home until you have verification that they haven't been exposed to COVID-19. We ask this because this has been the greatest statistical reason for contact tracing and associated quarantining within the district both last school year and so far this school year. The PA DOH requires contact tracing for the 48 hours prior to symptom onset. This scenario comes into play when a household member has symptoms, students come to school while the household member's test results are pending but stop coming to school when symptoms start, or they find out a household member is positive for COVID-19. The catch is if that student develops symptoms within 48 hours of being at school in-person, contact tracing then needs to occur in accordance with PA DOH contact tracing/quarantining expectations.

Dr. Jankowski, in response to Mr. Smith's question, said that if an absence is tied to a documented COVID situation, the district will not hold people negatively accountable.

Mr. John Fromille, resident and parent of four children currently in the district, addressed the Board regarding rumors circulating about a possible proposal involving the exemption forms for masking requiring a physician's verification. He questioned if the Board would be addressing that issue this evening?

Dr. Jankowski responded that the topic would be addressed under the next item on the agenda, the Health and Safety Plan.

Mr. Fromille commented that he would like to make a statement in that regard. He noted that at the last Board meeting, held on August 16<sup>th</sup>, the Board listened to the overall majority of the parents who did not want masking, and the Board chose to make masking optional. He commended the Board for doing so, by listening to the voice of the people and then doing the right thing. Mr. Fromille remarked that he has reached out to many local health care providers and cannot find even one doctor that will sign an exemption form for any reason. In the end, this new requirement will take away the voice of the parent for what they want for their children. He commented that if the Board takes the responsibility of this decision out of the parents' hand, and places it in the hands of doctors, there will be accountability. Mr. Fromille indicated that he is a Republican candidate for the Selinsgrove Borough Council and threatened to launch a campaign to unseat any Board member that votes to make this new requirement happen.

## **Board Discussion**

Dr. Jankowski explained that since the last Board meeting, the PA Department of Health put into place a face covering order which went into effect on September 7, 2021. He noted that this order is not in alignment with what the Board had put forth to start the 2021-2022 school year. Dr. Jankowski commented that as a district we look at where we have been, where we want to be, and also need to have in conjunction with what is being required of us. He spoke on behalf of the Board, saying that all of them don't like this situation; not because it's a tough decision, but because they really don't have a decision to make. Dr. Jankowski reviewed the actions taken by the Board up until this point in time. The Board acted on August 16<sup>th</sup> to approve the

district's Health and Safety Plan with masking/face coverings being optional across all district operations. On August 31<sup>st</sup> districts were notified of a face covering order for K-12 indoor operations which went into effect on September 7<sup>th</sup>. At that time, the district provided an exemption form for families to review and fill out if they have a child in need of an exemption. Shortly thereafter the district was notified of changing guidance from the PA Department of Education, which now requires medical documentation from a licensed healthcare provider to complete the exemption process.

Dr. Jankowski asked that everyone try to understand the complexity of the decision-making process. It's not as simple as the Board not listening to the parents. This decision is something that this Board and this district is being funneled into by the departments that govern us and the state of Pennsylvania. The Board is doing what they are required to do based upon the people and organizations that govern this state, whether you agree with masking or not. Mr. Teats commented that the problem is in Harrisburg and that is the bottom line.

Several Board members asked for clarification regarding the revisions to the Health and Safety Plan. It was explained that the revisions include the face covering order and the requirement of medical documentation from a licensed healthcare provider for exemption from the order and that families would be given seven days to supply the medical documentation.

Mr. Wolfe asked for a motion to act on the Health and Safety Plan as presented.

At this time, several unidentified individuals started expressing their opinions on the subject and accused the Board of passing the buck and following the money. They questioned what the consequence would be if the Board did not follow the order?

Jake Lewis spoke in support of the Board and the actions that have been taken thus far. He commented that they have stood up for the children better than other districts have and that they have done everything under their power until this point. Mr. Lewis asked that respect, appreciation, and support be shown to the Board.

Interruptions of the meeting continued by unidentified members of the audience. Mr. Wolfe stated that there is protocol for conducting of meetings and that individuals wishing to speak should have completed a request to comment form as mentioned earlier in the meeting.

Attorney Wiley asked that individuals identify themselves for the record which is a requirement at a public meeting. He explained that if the Board would not approve the revisions to the plan, they would be in violation of an order, which is considered the law until it is vacated or overturned.

Miranda Ulrich, a nurse for Family Practice Center, confirmed that families will be unable to receive medical documentation signed by a licensed healthcare provider as they have been directed not to sign the form; they are only willing to print out a diagnosis form.

Motion by Taylor and seconded by Augustine to approve revisions to the Selinsgrove Area School District's Health and Safety Plan, as presented. (a copy to be attached and made a part of the official minutes)

Mr. Teats commented that he finds it hard to believe that a medical care provider would not sign an exemption even for a student with a documented medical issue. Mrs. Taylor responded that she is a medical professional and would not sign a medical exemption.

On roll call vote: 8 yes, 1 no (Stauffer), 0 absent

Mrs. Stauffer questioned if students would now be required to wear masks on busses, since the Board previously approved it to be optional. Dr. Jankowski responded that the order alludes to all indoor situations, which would include bussing.

## **ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS**

### **Superintendent:**

Dr. Jankowski remarked that it is becoming increasingly complicated to be a leader for a community when you must adhere to mandates that don't coincide with what your personal leadership approach would be or the general consensus of what most people in the community would want. He noted that districts were told all summer that this would be a local decision. The Board voted for optional masking, as did the overwhelming majority of school districts in PA. He noted that, after that played a factor, along with rising cases of COVID throughout the Commonwealth, the Department of Education, in conjunction with the Department of Health, and the Governor decided that the best health decision was to have PK-12 students be required to mask. He noted that this is not the same masking order that was mandated last year, as this is targeted solely to students and staff of schools. The timing of the decision did not allow for much time for debate with the Commonwealth. He referred to strong lobby groups who have the authority to put orders into place, which are somewhat debatable to whether or not they would actually hold up, but that it is not for us to make that decision. As the district looks to evaluate the situation, the Board was very specifically notified of what the complex situation that they are in and how to go about being not legally liable, while at the same time still working the best as we can for our community. Dr. Jankowski indicated that if something loosens up, the Board will take another look at it again to make things right from the eyes of many. He wants everybody to understand that not everyone has the same views. The Board and district are legitimately trying to live up to expectations of the community. It's a very difficult situation. If we were more unified, we would be in a much better spot, because you wouldn't see opposition. Dr. Jankowski emphasized that the Board and district are not in opposition to what you want, whether you support masking or not. We want kids to be safe. We don't want them to have issues because they don't feel confident because they are wearing a mask. There is an impact on students and staff when they have to wear masks. He feels it is very important that everyone understand, based on your viewpoint, who is and who are the people that you need to contact if you disagree with what happened here tonight. This Board made this decision because they feel compelled that it is required of them. If you have an issue with the masking, go to the origin of the order. More people need to reach out to the people who actually make those decisions. We recognize that we are your local representatives, but we are telling you that we don't have the authority to make that decision at this time, we had the authority a few weeks ago. We are working everyday to keep your children safe. We have been making decisions, we want your kids to be safe, and we want you to be heard. This Board has heard you and will continue to hear you.

A round of applause was given in support of positive comments made to Dr. Jankowski for everything he has done in support of the children and for sticking up for them in fighting against the laws. Dr. Jankowski expressed appreciation, but also noted that it is a team effort. Board members also received praise for doing what they have been doing and acknowledged that it is out of their hands.

Dr. Jankowski reported that there are many success stories with students coming to school and building friendships with their peers. We have many success stories with students working with their teachers and are working to progress academically and socially. We have many success stories throughout the district where students are continuing their connections with extracurriculars such as athletics, clubs, band, etc. He commented that we need to make sure that, no matter what the viewpoint is on masking, that we create positive situations where we won't turn on each other.

**Business Manager:**

Mr. Hummel reported that the Business Office is working to close out the 2020-2021 fiscal year. He noted that the local audit began today and when that is complete and we have received our final financial statements for the year, the Budget and Finance Committee will meet to review those documents.

**Assistant Superintendent:**

Mr. Parise commented that, as mentioned in his Board Report, work continues with various groups and committees to complete updates to the district's Comprehensive Plan. He explained that the plan needs to be submitted for a new three-year cycle and is due November 30. He reported that a draft copy of the plan is currently posted on the curriculum page of the district's website. Mr. Parise explained that the comprehensive plan will be presented to the Board in October for approval.

**Director of Facilities and Athletics:**

Mr. Simpson brought the Board up to date on capital projects which included campus paving projects, installation of a boiler at the Intermediate School, installation of a wall between the gymnasium and the cafeteria at the High School, and the Middle School elevator project which has been delayed due to parts.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Budget and Finance:** No report.

**Buildings and Grounds:** No report.

**Policy and Education:** No report.

**Extracurricular:** Mr. Bechtel, Chair, commented that interviews were held, and the committee is recommending Jessica Chappell as Head Varsity Girls' Softball Coach.

**Personnel/Meet and Discuss:** Motion by Teats and seconded by Stauffer to approve the following personnel matters:

**Letter of Intent to Retire at the End of the 2021-2022 School Year:** Robert Whyne as a Guidance Counselor at the High School

**Rescinding Letter of Intent to Retire on December 31, 2021:** Todd Myers as an English Teacher at the High School

**Resignations:** Megan A. Moll as a Library Clerical Assistant at the Intermediate School, effective August 27, 2021; and Lukas Auker (verbal resignation) as Varsity Girls' Tennis Head Coach, effective September 7, 2021

**Staff Elections:** Amber N. Young as a Special Education Paraprofessional at the Intermediate School, effective retroactive to August 23, 2021, at the hourly rate of \$11.50; Faith Moore as a Life Skills Support Paraprofessional at the High School, effective retroactive to September 7, 2021, at the hourly rate of \$11.50 (pending receipt of required paperwork); Lori Kenney as a Full-Time Reading Intervention Tutor at the Intermediate School, tentatively effective September 14, 2021, at the hourly rate of \$16.00; Kara Sensenig as a Cook/Cashier at the Selinsgrove Elementary School, effective September 14, 2021, at the hourly rate of \$11.00; Elaina Bailor as a Cook/Cashier at the Selinsgrove Elementary School, effective September 14, 2021, at the hourly rate of \$11.00; Kathy Zeigler as a Utility Aide at Selinsgrove Elementary School,

effective retroactive to September 10, 2021, at the hourly rate of \$11.00; Hannah Pursel as a 1:1 Life Skills Paraprofessional at the CSIU Work Foundations, effective October 1, 2021, at the hourly rate of \$14.00 (pending receipt of required paperwork); Paige Smith as Jr. High Softball Assistant Coach, effective with the Fall Jr. High Softball Season; Matthew Salsman as Varsity Girls' Tennis Head Coach, effective September 7, 2021; Jessica L. Chappell as Head Varsity Girls' Softball Coach, effective September 13, 2021

**2021-2022 District Volunteers:** Shelley Bogush, Jaime Carpenter, Rachel Dagle, Rose Hook, Angela Kline, Angela O'Brien, Lisa Orner, Collin Reichard, Nicole Ressler, Angela Stebila, Kimberly Strawser, Bethany Umholtz, Megan Dauberman-Yoder, (without salary, benefits, or expectation of any other compensation)

**2021-2022 Middle School Employees with Supplemental Duty Contracts:**

Michelle Carnahan – Student Council Co-Advisor  
Juanita Underkoffler – Student Council Co-Advisor

**2021-2022 High School Employees with Supplemental Duty Contracts:**

Cristi Beeler – Yearbook Co-Advisor  
Tammy Newberry – Yearbook Co-Advisor

**Substitutes:** Teachers – Mary Bannon, Debbie Drzewiecki, Katie Heintzelman, Erin McQuillen; Guest Teachers – Becca Fogle, Hannah Fogle, and Devon Somers; Paraprofessionals – Elaina Bailor and Amy Ward; School Police Officer – Olegario Martinez (pending receipt of required paperwork)

**Other Matters:** Entering into a Professional Contract with Susan Michler for successfully completing three (3) years of teaching, effective August 20, 2021.

On roll call vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 absent

**Transportation:** Motion by Stauffer and seconded by Paladino to consider the recommendation of the Transportation Coordinator to approve Sky Kauffman as a Bus Driver for Rohrer Bus Service, and Joanna Mowery as a Bus Driver for Weikel Busing, during the 2021-2022 school year.

The motion was unanimously carried.

**Technology:** No report.

**SUN Area Technical Institute Joint Operating Committee:** No report.

**CSIU Board of Directors:** Mr. Augustine, Representative, reported that the Board will meet on Wednesday, September 15, 2021, via Zoom. He noted that the new Executive Director has met with each Board member individually.

**PSBA:** Mr. Hess, Liaison, reported that PSBA recently testified in Harrisburg on property tax reform. He noted that their stance is that reform plans that simply shift local tax revenues away from property taxes to alternatives, such as the sales and use tax, are not solutions to the problem. Mr. Hess explained that the problem is that public education is becoming so expensive because of pensions, Charter School tuition payments, and special education costs. He noted that these are on-going issues and that PSBA continues advocating for public education.

**NEW BUSINESS****Business Matters:**

Motion by Augustine and seconded by Bechtel to consider approving the real estate tax assessment appeal agreement with Lowe's Home Center Inc., as presented. (a copy of the agreement to be attached and made a part of the official minutes)

Mr. Teats questioned what would happen if we did not approve the result of the appeal agreement? Attorney Wiley noted that the district would then have to pay an expert to challenge the agreement on its' own. He explained that these are settlements that are reached by all three taxing bodies (district, county, and municipality) and the costs are shared.

On roll call vote: 7 yes, 2 no (Slivinski & Teats), 0 absent

**Request for Textbook Approval:**

Motion by Stauffer and seconded by Paladino to consider the recommendation of the Assistant Superintendent to approve the purchase of the following textbook: Algebra 2 by Martin-Gay, Pearson Publishing, 120 books at a cost of \$21,356.40. (Funds are available in the 2021-2022 curriculum budget.)

On roll call vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 absent

**Extended Day Field Trip:**

Motion by Teats and seconded by Stauffer to consider approving a request from the High School Principal for an extended day field trip made on behalf of the FFA to attend the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, IN, October 26 through 29, 2021, with the understanding that depending on health conditions that permission could be retracted.

The motion was unanimously carried.

**Adjournment:**

Mr. Wolfe announced that an Executive Session regarding personnel matters would be held immediately following adjournment.

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia A. Beaver  
Recording Secretary

cab/min91321